

---

## 5.3 Land Use Patterns

*Land use planning helps to create and maintain vital communities with close-knit neighborhoods, a sustainable economy, protected natural systems, and an efficient public infrastructure. Balancing transportation and other land use needs through coordinated planning efforts help communities realize their visions. Local land use directly influences traffic patterns, which, in turn, help to shape the project design and development.*

### **How do communities in the project area plan for growth, and how do these plans influence businesses and residences?**

Many communities plan for growth at the citywide and neighborhood levels. Citywide planning documents, such as comprehensive plans and land use plans, provide overall policy guidance for future development and address topics such as land use, housing, parks and open space, public infrastructure, and the environment. Neighborhood plans allow for a detailed examination of issues affecting smaller geographic areas within the municipality. The cities of Renton, Newcastle, and Bellevue, as well as King County, have comprehensive plans that describe how their neighborhoods should evolve over time. Those same neighborhoods depend on the freeway, transit, and connecting arterial transportation systems that serve them. For these reasons, it is important that the Renton to Bellevue Project be consistent with community plans and that the community plans acknowledge the role of the transportation system in helping to accommodate planned growth.

As shown in Exhibit 5.3-1, the affected communities have planned for commercial land uses to occur at several of the I-405 interchanges. This is because visibility, ease of access, and the volume of pass-by traffic, are important factors to many businesses. People in nearby residential areas, however, desire low volumes of traffic on their streets. Higher commuter or cut-through traffic volumes on residential streets can create traffic congestion, as well as noise, air quality, safety, and parking issues within neighborhoods.



**Bus at the Renton Transit Center**

---

*Please refer to the Renton to Bellevue Project Land Use Plans and Policies and Land Use Patterns discipline reports in Appendices I and J, respectively, (on CD), for a complete discussion of land use policies and analysis.*

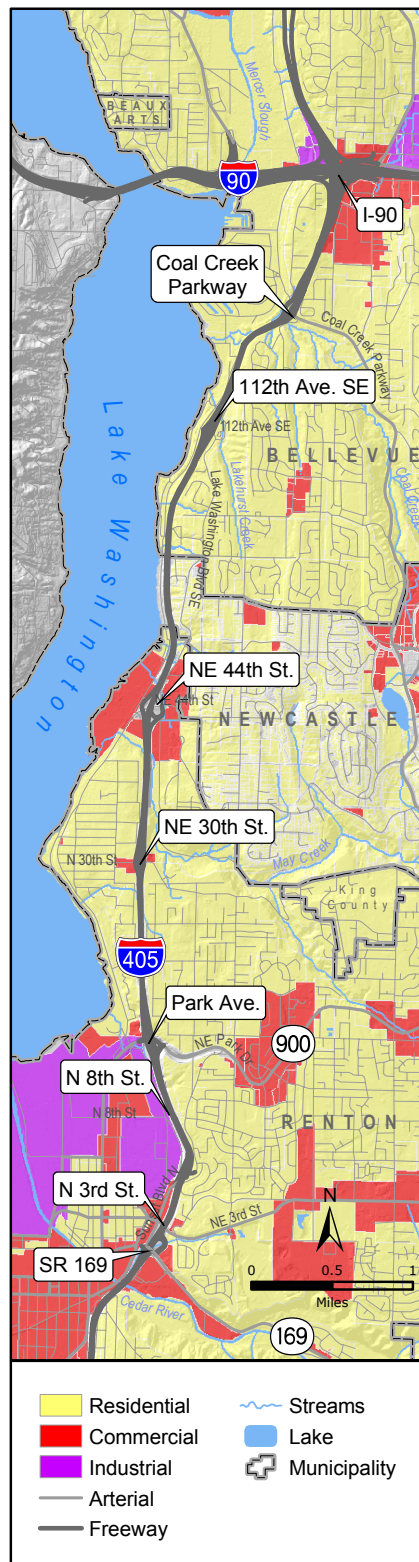
---



**Bellevue incorporates, 1953**

*Image courtesy of the Museum of History and Industry - Seattle, Washington*

**Exhibit 5.3-1: Planned land use patterns**



### **Will the proposed project affect adopted plans and policies?**

Renton, Newcastle, Bellevue, and King County comprehensive plan policies support state highway improvements. The improved traffic circulation resulting from the Renton to Bellevue Project will help implement, and thus be consistent with, the cities' and King County's policies. Renton to Bellevue project improvements will also improve levels of service on I-405 and local streets. Minor inconsistencies were noted between municipal plans and the Renton to Bellevue Project, including: 1) rerouting of local streets may require Renton Comprehensive Plan improvements to functional classifications and bicycle improvement plans; 2) City of Renton includes improvements after 2022 in its capital improvements programs that are beyond the scope of the I-405 Program; and 3) Coal Creek underpass width may not allow for the City of Bellevue's planned full cross-section in the time horizon of the City's plan. Plan conflicts can be resolved through plan amendments in conformance with the Growth Management Act and other State laws. City and WSDOT level of service and concurrency review processes will assure that planned developments are accommodated by committed improvements. No unavoidable adverse effects related to land use plans and policies are anticipated for the project.

### **How can traffic patterns affect businesses and residences?**

Changing traffic patterns can have positive or negative effects on business success and residential area appeal. The types of businesses in a commercial area may change in response to altered traffic patterns and accessibility. For example, a service station and a professional office generate different traffic patterns and have different needs for accessibility.

Land use in a residential area that experiences a high level of traffic may eventually change to a higher intensity use (i.e., multi-family residential, commercial, or a mix of the two). This type of change, however, can be influenced by other factors including economics, political climate, zoning, and comprehensive plan designations.

### **How will the project affect businesses and residences?**

Noise, dust, vibration, glare, traffic detours, traffic delays, and visual disturbance will temporarily affect users of adjacent

properties and the local street system. Some businesses may be affected by disruptions to access. These temporary effects last only as long as construction is taking place and typically do not affect long-term land use development potential or development patterns. Traffic volumes on some residential streets in the project's proximity will temporarily increase because of traffic detours.

Permanent construction-related effects will result from converting private property to public ownership. Before construction, WSDOT will need to purchase property and, therefore, relocate some residences and businesses, and demolish existing structures. WSDOT will use acquired right of way for storm drainage facilities, noise mitigation, and roadway and transit improvements.

Existing land use in the project area will benefit as a result of transportation system improvements. WSDOT expects that the widening of I-405 will alleviate some of the vehicular congestion on adjacent local streets. Easier access and better traffic flow on I-405 will encourage commuters to use the freeway instead of seeking alternative routes on local streets.

***What would happen if we did not build the project?***

If the project is not built, growth would likely occur at a slower rate. Congestion and limitations in accessibility could cause businesses and related populations to locate elsewhere within the region.

